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# Fort Wagner/Morris Island

**Other Names:** Second Assault, Morris Island

**Location:** City of Charleston

**Campaign:** Operations against Defenses of Charleston (1863)

**Date(s):** July 18-September 7, 1863

**Principal Commanders:** Maj. Gen. Quincy Gillmore [US]; Gen. P.G.T. Beauregard [CS]

**Forces Engaged:** 6,800 total (US 5,000; CS 1,800)

**Estimated Casualties:** 1,689 total (US 1,515; CS 174)

**Description:** After the July 11 assault on Fort Wagner failed, Gillmore reinforced his beachhead on Morris Island. At dusk July 18, Gillmore **launched an attack spearheaded by the 54th Massachusetts Infantry, a black regiment**. The unit's colonel, Robert Gould Shaw, was killed. Members of the brigade scaled the parapet but after brutal hand-to-hand combat were driven out with heavy casualties. The Federals resorted to siege operations to reduce the fort. This was the fourth time in the war that black troops played a crucial combat role, proving to skeptics that they would fight bravely if only given the chance.

**Result(s):** Confederate victory